

✓ KEY TAKEAWAYS

• TOLLING CONTINUES TO MEET GOALS – WSDOT

has met every traffic and performance goal on the SR 520 bridge, Tacoma Narrows bridge and SR 167 HOT lanes.

• NEW PROGRAM HELPS RESOLVE CUSTOMER

DISPUTES – WSDOT's new program to resolve customer issues and waive civil penalties has resulted in increased collection of outstanding toll revenue.

• EXPRESS TOLL LANES LAUNCHED ON I-405 –

Since opening in September 2015, the I-405 express toll lanes have provided reliable trips for transit, carpools and vanpools.

• CONTINUOUS

IMPROVEMENT – While early results on I-405 are promising, WSDOT is listening to concerns from drivers and is committed to making improvements.



Declining gas tax revenues and aging infrastructure make tolls a critical part of the state's funding strategy for new, large transportation projects. It's also an effective tool for efficiently managing traffic on our increasingly busy highways.

The Washington State Department of Transportation reintroduced tolling to Washington state in 2007 with the opening of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, followed by the SR 167 HOT lanes in 2008, SR 520 bridge in 2011, and I-405 express toll lanes in 2015.

Setting state toll policy

Legislation passed in 2008 established state tolling objectives, powers and duties stating that tolling should be used when it can:

- Contribute a significant portion of the cost of a project that cannot be funded solely with existing sources
- Optimize performance of the transportation system

The 2008 toll policy bill also set tolling authority:

- Legislature authorizes tolls
- Washington State Transportation Commission sets toll rates
- WSDOT proposes, builds, operates and processes toll collection

The WSDOT Toll Division was established in 2009 to ensure the success of a new tolling system that includes the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, SR 167 HOT lanes, SR 520, and the I-405 express toll lanes. As the Toll Division enters its seventh year, it continues to focus on providing a customer-friendly toll experience.

Tolling continues to meet goals

- The new I-405 express toll lanes are already providing reliable trips for transit, carpools and vanpools and saving non-carpool drivers an average of 12 minutes southbound during the AM peak for an average toll of \$2.60, and an average of 16 minutes northbound during PM peak for an average toll of \$3.10.
- More drivers are using the SR 167 HOT lanes – HOT lane drivers save an average of eight minutes on their trip for a \$2.50 toll.
- SR 520 Bridge tolling on track – SR 520 Bridge tolling continues to meet its two central goals: to generate revenue to help finance the replacement bridge and reduce congestion on SR 520.
- Paying for a new Tacoma Narrows Bridge – WSDOT continues to make debt payments to pay for the construction of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Continuous customer service experience improvements

In July 2015, WSDOT announced first-time toll violators now have the opportunity to request a waiver of fees and penalties if they agree to pay all outstanding tolls. The purpose of this program is to collect the toll and educate customers so they won't get behind on their bills in the future. This gives drivers who have been caught off guard by toll penalties the opportunity to resolve old toll bills and learn what they need to do to avoid incurring penalties again.

TOLLING BY THE NUMBERS IN FY 2015

38.9 million toll transactions a year

Tacoma Narrows Bridge: 15.7 million

SR 520 Bridge: 22 million

SR 167 HOT Lanes: 1.2 million

Toll bridge revenue covers bond payments and operational costs

Tacoma Narrows Bridge: \$68.2 million gross revenue in FY 2015

SR 520 Bridge: \$64.0 million gross revenue in FY 2015

SR 167 HOT lanes usage has quadrupled since 2008

SR 167 HOT Lanes: \$1.2 million gross revenue

60,000 new *Good To Go!* accounts in FY 2015

The customer service center handled 438,000 phone calls and 116,000 visits in FY 2015.

Top reasons for contacting *Good To Go!*:

- update account information
- make a payment
- buy a pass

Customer's Program for Resolution

- Nearly 31,000 vehicles have had their civil penalties waived through the new *Good To Go!* customer resolution program. Approximately 270,000 violations have been dismissed.
- We have collected over \$1 million in toll revenue as a result of this program.

Since WSDOT began offering the Pay By Mail option in 2011, WSDOT made numerous improvements based on feedback from customers regarding envelopes and bills. In 2015, WSDOT redesigned Pay By Mail toll bills, civil penalty notices and envelopes, based on best practices from across the country and focus group feedback.

I-405 Express Toll Lanes – opened Sept. 27, 2015

It's early but initial results are promising

Drivers choosing to use the express toll lanes have seen an immediate benefit with a more reliable trip. Travel times in the regular lanes have improved or remain the same for drivers traveling the whole corridor between Bellevue and Lynnwood, but congestion points have shifted and drivers traveling shorter distances may be experiencing longer travel times. Traffic volumes have remained steady or increased on I-405 compared to 2014 and traffic does not seem to be going to I-5, I-90 or SR 522. WSDOT is working closely with cities and jurisdictions to monitor traffic on their roadways. Transit ridership has increased and more people are benefiting from a faster commute in the express toll lanes.

I-405 express toll lanes

- Over 1 million trips each month
- Over 170,000 Flex Passes distributed

WSDOT is listening to driver concerns and making improvements

While we've heard positive stories from drivers using the express toll lanes, we also have heard concerns from drivers and are taking them seriously. WSDOT has already made adjustments to striping at certain locations to improve access and reduce confusion. Additional adjustments are planned, but work is weather dependent. It's only been three months since express toll lanes opened and WSDOT expected a learning curve of about 6 months to a year for drivers to adjust based on experience across the country. While its performance so far has been promising, it's early and more time is needed to demonstrate the success of express toll lanes. The Legislature authorized tolling on I-405 in 2011 and gave WSDOT two years after launch to achieve certain performance metrics.

For more information

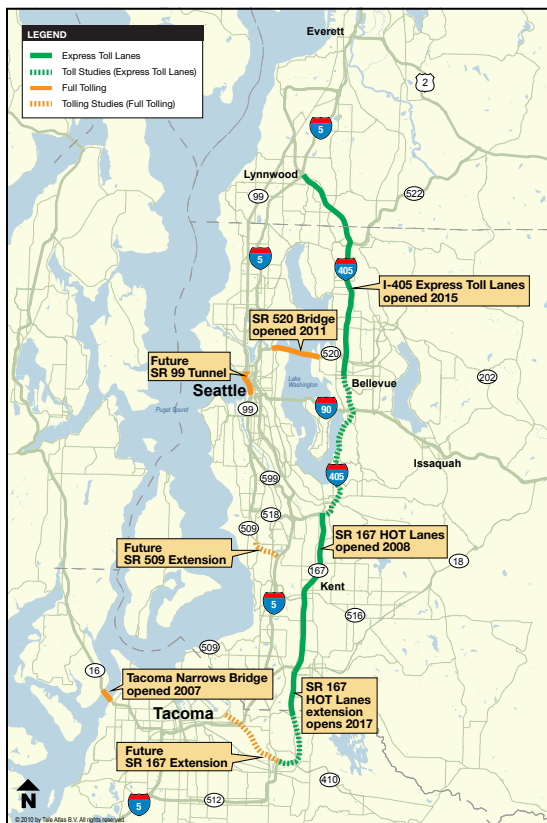
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